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### The Endurance Test

THE presidential race has settled down to an endurance test, both parties bound to see which will out-maudlin the other, and to date the poor oppressed reading public believes that the race is about even. Consider two big husky gentlemen ranging around seeking the high office of President of the United States, the highest in the world for a fact, and their organists or propagandists, or whatever the press agents are called, rubbing their hands up and down the people's back and murmuring silly blubberings about Warren and Jimmie, and what good little boys they were at school, and what darling little lovers they made when they grew to calthood, and what world-beaters they were when they finally came to man's estate and were pushed into the political arena. It is to laugh to see these big boys, Warren and Jimmie, throwing mud pies of meaningless charges at each other, one from a porch, the other from the tail of a railroad train. And consider, with the world standing on a ticklish edge, these two big boys the chosen representatives of the politicians, supposedly of the people, slapping each other on the wrist with charges and countercharges of slush funds. That too would be funny if it were not a tragedy.

What boots it if Jimmie can cook bacon better than Warren? The newspapers use columns on this junk and bunk. What world destiny is behind the fact that Warren can set type faster than Jimmie? The country and the world are not looking for a sweet old thing but for a man, with ideas and force, a leader and adviser of Congress and the people, not a quarrelor with both. Some time, when the country gets the right to vote by direct election, it is going to pick a man who can be called more than a horn-blower or a horseman, a man in whom it can feel that it has a real driver at the wheel, one who will run the old ship true to its course and let the people go back to tasks and pleasures with an easy mind, one who will save the newspapers space now given over to bacon-cooking flubdub and horn-blowing mush and let them turn that space over to more legitimate news.

### The Consumer Scores

SIMPLE and ordinary workings of economic laws smashed at least one of the points that have made the high cost of living uncomfortable for Americans. Sugar has dropped. Its fall was a joy to the public and a blow to speculators and profiteers, which is as things should be.

It took no extraordinary edict to break the price. The commodity was held speculatively for a high price, largely by means of credits. The price rose, and America being the best market, every country that had sugar to sell shipped it to the United States.

The supply became enormous, the amount of money tied up in holding it more and more unwieldy. The banks tightened their credit, called their loans, and the men holding the sugar were forced to dispose of it to meet their debts. Large quantities were thrown on the market.

Presto! the available supply became greater than the current demand and bang went the price. A good many other commodities are going the same way sooner or later.

### Amending Matrimony

EVERY now and then someone gets excited about the well-known institution of matrimony and wants it amended. The latest is an American writer, a woman, visiting in England, who concurs in the theory that husbands and wives should live happily apart.

Of course this is based on a rather limited conception of marriage. Marriage without a family is a rather ridiculous institution, and for the rearing of a family the separate ménage is merely silly. It is true that

marriages break up and that some of them are better dissolved than maintained. But in an enormous number of cases, divorce involves largely a lack of steadfastness in one of the partners of the marriage.

Marriages crash on trifles, which, with a little forbearance and the ordinary steadiness of purpose which persons bring to bear in less important affairs of life, would actually amount to nothing. Children, perhaps, act as a stay but not so much as one would think.

Lacking this steadfastness, no arrangement of living apart will do anything to forward marriage until radical changes of civilization destroy the family as an institution.

### The Note on Russia

THE reception of Secretary Colby's note on the American policy toward Russia has been as various as the plans of the European nations to whom it was addressed. France approves, being adamant in her intention not to recognize the Bolsheviks. The British look upon it without favor, as it does not join the Lloyd George program of partial recognition and complete trade relations with Moscow.

Stripped of argument and explanation, the note describes a policy of watchful waiting. It demands that Russia's desires be known before the United States takes a final decision as to policy. On the face of it, this is not such a bad notion, as information is always a good thing before a course of action is mapped.

On the other hand, it may condemn the United States to a temporary policy, pursued for an indefinite time. There is no immediate prospect that the constituent assembly or other duly authorized gathering of that sort may proclaim its views, and very little chance that an unopposed and generally recognized government will control Russia.

Thus the policy may from time to time present difficulties of a political nature, and certainly it will for a considerable time serve as an absolute bar to trade.

### Black Bread and Bolshevism

FIVE HUNDRED Italian sailors recently made an experiment in Bolshevism and were cured. They made it under excellent conditions, and were fortunate that they left for themselves a line of retreat. These men were of the crews of Italian warships at Odessa and the Soviet made an effort to recruit them for its forces. They were entertained and for two days refused to return to their ships.

Then the bad food of the Communists got in its fine work. The sour black bread gave them indigestion, and indigestion brought reflection. They returned to their ships, satisfied that Italy was better than Russia.

These sailors were fortunate in that they had set their feet on the untried road and could turn back without years of blood and suffering. For nations, there is no such easy path. Whether Russia would turn back if she could, we have no means of knowing, but certainly her road to decent life will be a hard and bloody one, harder and bloodier perhaps than the road to the depths which she has traveled.

Hungary went over the ridge to the Reds and has fought her way back. Death and misery and cruelty marked both ways, and she is still sunk in all but hopeless misery.

A little indigestion was a small price for the Italian sailors to pay for their recovery.

### Let Them Be Punished

THERE is an axiom as old as the automobile that gasoline and whisky will not mix. The drunken driver has always been the greatest menace of the roads, and it is curious that this menace should increase with the country dry.

Some, doubtless, think that this is an indictment of prohibition, but it is hardly that. Not the most ardent advocate of cold water believed that the country would be arid as soon as the law was enacted, and if anyone with a memory wishes to look back at the campaign waged for the dry amendment he will note that it was not those accustomed to drink all their lives that the law expected to reach, but the growing generation.

Not a small part of drunkenness today comes from the imbibing of unbelievable concoctions, one or two drinks of which will set the birds twittering in the most hardened drinker's brain. As long as these men stay out of automobiles, they hurt few but themselves. When they persist in driving they should be dealt with, perhaps not by prison sentence, but certainly in such a way as will deter them trying to drive while intoxicated.

In that way, the menace will pass, for it is not very likely that the young man of tomorrow ever will have acquired a taste for the stuff his father drinks in lieu of his banned liquor.

### State Rights and Rail Rates

SINCE the awarding of the new railroad rates by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the roads in various parts of the country have been up in arms against state regulations which require them to charge a lower rate of passenger fare in intra-state traffic. In most cases, so far, they have successfully combated the laws, although no final decision has been reached by the Supreme Court.

The decisions to make the state fare march with the interstate have been equitable. If the higher interstate fare is needed, it is certainly true that the short state hauls should carry the same rate of fare, but equity aside, the controversy is an old one which must some day be settled if the transportation problem of the United States is to be solved.

It is nothing less than the old struggle between state and Federal authority applied to the steam roads. It has been raging in one form or another ever since the question of rate making became a public issue, and it has been quite obvious all along that there has been only one way in which it can be settled finally.

The rates of any road doing an interstate business must in the end be entirely a Federal matter. In this way only can injustice and discrimination be prevented. It will automatically follow that any short line doing a business entirely within a state—there are few such lines, incidentally—will be permitted by the state to charge the ordinary Federal rate, because without that it will not be able to exist.

### The New Triple Alliance

A NEW power has sprung up in Central and Eastern Europe. The little entente of Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and Jugo Slavia is an alliance fraught with the greatest possibilities both for good and for evil.

Its terms are for self-protection, mostly against the Bolsheviks, but finally against anyone. It constitutes a step in the creation of a new balance of power which it was the object of the League of Nations project to abolish, and its effects cannot be calculated.

In a sense, it is a Danubian league, and the countries involved have much in common. If it is truly and honestly carried out, if no ambitions of one country drag it into a war, there is much in the history of the three peoples involved that would indicate it as a truly defensive alliance, in which the national characteristics of one nation will serve as a check on the others.

The Jugo Slavs, with the Serbs predominating, are a proud and warlike people, with intrigue their chief vice in the past. The Rumanians, not less proud, are less warlike and have been noted for caution and slow movement in their foreign relations, with the ability to strike and strike hard only when they consider the hour ripe.

Czechoslovakia has no recent history, but peacefulness, hard work, and a stubborn courage are the characteristics of the people of the new republic. They look like the balance wheel of the new combination, which may become a dominating factor in Europe.

### The House Is Too Big

CELESTINO GASCA is a person unique in a mad world. Gasca is the governor of the Federal district which includes Mexico City, and he wishes to have his job abolished because there is no need of it. His business in private life is that of a shoemaker, and he wouldn't mind going right back to that.

There is a political axiom that some officeholders die but none resign, and to this ought to be added that a job is created but never abolished unless two jobs rise in its stead. Gasca's example will not start an epidemic, but it should and the United States would be better off if it started right in Washington.

Following the completion of the 1920 census, the already unwieldy and almost useless House will have added to it a now unknown number of members. There are instances on record where the membership of the House has been reduced, but on the whole it has grown till it is the most helpless legislative body in existence. The only hope for it is a drastic cut, and that is beyond the possibilities.

The Senate, thanks to constitutional limitations, grows more slowly. It can still function after a fashion. The House does not function, it welters. Its membership is far too large, and it can only be reduced by its own act.

Facing reduction, two things enter, the fact that if the number of Representatives is reduced, many will lose their jobs and that some of the states will drop in their proportional representation. Thus both individual ambition and state pride work against any reasonable handling of the swollen lower branch of the legislature, and make the hope of any self-denying ordinance a slight one.